

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1409

WHITE HOUSE IMMEDIATE

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DEPARTMENT FOR A AND EA

WHITE HOUSE FOR ADVANCE OFFICE AND NORMAL PACIFIC BASIN TRIP  
DISTRIBUTION

EO 11652: NA

TAGS: OVIP (FORD GERALD)

SUBJ: PRESIDENTIAL VISIT:INFORMATION ON SITES VISITED

REF: STATE 277347; WH 52258

1. FOLLOWING IS BRIEF BACKGROUND ON ISTANA NEGARA AND ISTANA  
MERDEKA:

2. THERE ARE TWO PRESIDENTIAL PALACES IN JAKARTA, THE ISTANA  
MERDEKA (FREEDOM PALACE) AND THE ISTANA NEGARA (STATE PALACE)  
BOTH LOCATED WITHIN THE SAME COMPOUND. THE ISTANA MERDEKA,  
AN IMPRESSIVE BUILDING WITH TALL CORINTHIAN PILLARS, WAS  
COMPLETED IN 1878 AND IS OF GREAT HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE  
SINCE IT IS THE BUILDING OVER WHICH THE DUTCH FLAG WAS LOWERED  
IN 1949 FOLLOWING FOUR YEARS OF FIGHTING. HEADS OF STATE AND  
AMBASSADORS ARE NORMALLY RECEIVED AT THE ELEGANTLY DECORATED  
ISTANA MERDEKA.

3. THE ISTANA NEGARA BUILT A HALF CENTURY EARLIER AS A RESIDENCE  
FOR THE DUTCH GOVERNOR GENERALS HAS A SMALL GALLERY OF INDONESIAN  
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PAINTINGS DEPICTING EPISODES OF INDONESIA'S STRUGGLE FOR INDE-

PENDENCE AND A DISPLAY OF TRADITIONAL WEAPONS USED IN INDONESIAN BATTLES. THE DINING HALL WHERE STATE BANQUETS ARE HELD IS DECORATED IN A NEO-CLASSIC STYLE BUT DECORATIVE THEMES MAY VARY DEPENDING ON THE COUNTRY OF THE GUEST. THE MOST HISTORICAL ROOM AT THE ISTANA NEGARA IS THE CEREMONY ROOM WHERE FORMAL CEREMONIES MAY BE HELD AND WHERE THE PRESIDENT AND THE FIRST LADY MAY MEET WITH DELEGATIONS. AT THE SIDE OF THIS LARGE HALL IS A STAGE WHERE TRADITIONAL INDONESIAN DANCES AND MUSIC ARE USUALLY PERFORMED FOR GUESTS.

4. A SPACIOUS, WELL-TENDED LAWN WITH FLOWERING BUSHES ENHANCES THE MERDEKA PALACE WHERE EACH YEAR ON AUGUST 17 THE INDONESIANS WITNESS THE INDEPENDENCE DAY CEREMONIES. ON THE FRONT STEPS OF ISTANA MERDEKA, THE PRESIDENT HANDS THE BENDERA PUSAKA (THE FLAG USED ON AUGUST 17, 1945) TO BOYS AND GIRLS REPRESENTING THE 26 INDONESIAN PROVINCES.

5. INFORMATION ON THE TAMAN MINIATUR INDONESIA INDAH WILL BE FORWARDED SOONEST IN SEPARATE MESSAGE. THIS SITE PROPOSED FOR VISIT BY MRS FORD. NEWSOM

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